# EXHIBIT D

## SCOTT ALLEN TOMEI vs PARKWEST MEDICAL CENTER and COVENANT HEALTH Tomei, Tala - 12/16/2019

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
 1
            FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE
 2
                        AT KNOXVILLE
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 4
    SCOTT ALLEN TOMEI,
 5
                   Plaintiff,
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 7
                                     No. 3:19-cv-00041
    v.
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 9
    PARKWEST MEDICAL CENTER
    and COVENANT HEALTH,
10
11
                   Defendants.
12
13
14
                  DEPOSITION OF TALA TOMEI
15
                         (Volume I)
16
17
                      December 16, 2019
18
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    ______
20
              JEFF RUSK COURT REPORTING & VIDEO
              Registered Professional Reporters
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24	
25	

•		19 - 1
1	INDEX	
2	EXAMINATION BY	PAGE
3	Mr. Young	5
4		
5	NO. INDEX OF EXHIBITS	PAGE
6	(No Exhibits)	
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

	1	DEPOSITION,
	2	The deposition of TALA TOMEI, taken at the
	3	request of the Defendants, pursuant to the Federal
	4	Rules of Civil Procedure, on the 16th day of
	5	December, 2019, at the offices of Arnett, Draper &
	6	Hagood, Suite 2300, First Tennessee Plaza,
	7	Knoxville, Tennessee, before Jeffrey D. Rusk,
	8	Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public
	9	at Large for the State of Tennessee.
	10	It is agreed that the deposition may be
	11	taken in machine shorthand by Jeffrey D. Rusk,
	12	Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public,
	13	and that he may swear the witness and thereafter
	14	transcribe his notes to typewriting and sign the
	15	name of the witness thereto, and that all
	16	formalities touching caption, certificate, filing,
	17	transmission, etc., are expressly waived.
	18	It is further agreed that all objections
	19	except as to the form of the questions are reserved
	20	to on or before the hearing.
	21	TALA TOMEI,
	22	called as a witness at the instance of the
	23	Defendants, having been first duly sworn, was
	24	examined and deposed as follows:
	25	
J		

1	(Proceedings began at 4:43 PM)
2	EXAMINATION
3	BY MR. YOUNG:
4	Q. Ms. Tomei, my name is Broderick
5	Young, this is Devin Lyon. And we represent, with a
6	couple other attorneys, Parkwest and Covenant Health
7	in this lawsuit that we are here about today.
8	You're familiar with the fact that
9	this lawsuit is pending?
10	A. Uh-huh. Yes.
11	Q. Okay. Have you ever been in a
12	deposition before.
13	A. No, sir.
14	Q. Well, a deposition is a little bit
15	different than a normal conversation. One, it's a
16	proceeding in a lawsuit. You're under oath.
17	Do you understand what that means?
18	A. Yes.
19	Q. And for our purposes the biggest
20	distinction is everything is being typed that you're
21	saying and transcribed, and we are going to do
22	everything we can to have an accurate and clear
23	record, and so to have that clear record we want to
24	observe a few protocols, one of which it's real
25	important for you to answer my questions with verbal
25	important for you to answer my questions with verbal

1	responses.	
2	Α.	Okay.
3	Q.	If you shake your head or if you
4	give kind of hal	f enunciated words like uh-huh or
5	huh-uh, I unders	tand what you are meaning today, but
6	if we go back an	d look at this several months from
7	now or years fro	m now, God forbid, we may not fully
8	understand what	it is you meant, so it's always
9	important to ful	ly enunciate whatever your responses
10	are.	
11		And it's always important for you
12	to let me finish	my question before you begin to
13	answer yours. O	ne, I may not be asking the question
14	you think I'm as	king and, two, it jumbles up the
15	record if we sta	rt talking over each other.
16		Have you ever been in a lawsuit
17	before?	
18	Α.	No.
19	Q.	What is your address?
20	Α.	224 Hope, H-o-p-e, Way, Loudon,
21	Tennessee, 37774	
22	Q.	How far do you have live from your
23	dad?	
24	Α.	About 15 minutes.
25	Q.	Do you live alone?

1	А.	No, I live with my mom.
2	Q.	Have you always lived with your
3	mom?	
4	Α.	No.
5	Q.	Where does your mom live? The 224
6	Hope Way?	
7	Α.	Uh-huh.
8	Q.	Okay. Where are you currently
9	employed?	
10	Α.	Carolina Ale House.
11	Q.	Here in Knoxville?
12	Α.	Yes, sir.
13	Q.	And what do you do for them?
14	Α.	I'm a server.
15	Q.	Okay. How long have you worked
16	there?	
17	Α.	A year.
18	Q.	Did you attend high school in
19	Loudon?	
20	Α.	In Lenoir City.
21	Q.	Which high school did you go to?
22	А.	Lenoir City High School.
23	Q.	Did you graduate?
24	А.	Yes.
25	Q.	Did you attend any schooling after

1	that?	
2	Α.	I went to real estate school.
3	Q.	Okay. Did you graduate?
4	Α.	Yes.
5	Q.	Did you get a real estate license?
6	Α.	Yes.
7	Q.	Did you ever practice?
8	Α.	Yes.
9	Q.	Okay. Do you still do some real
10	estate?	
11	Α.	Here and there sometimes.
12	Q.	You still have your license though,
13	right?	
14	Α.	Yes.
15	Q.	As far as being a server, have you
16	been a server an	ywhere else?
17	Α.	Yes.
18	Q.	Okay. Where is that?
19	Α.	I worked at Cracker Barrel in
20	Lenoir City.	
21	Q.	All right.
22	Α.	And then I worked at a diner called
23	Good Eats Cafe.	
24	Q.	Okay.
25	Α.	And then I lived in North Carolina

1	for a little whi	le and worked at a restaurant there
2	called Lone Star	Steak House.
3	Q.	Your dad said you might be taking
4	some online cour	rses. Are you taking any online
5	courses?	
6	Α.	No.
7	Q.	Do you have any plans to go back to
8	school?	
9	Α.	Yes.
10	Q.	What would you like to do?
11	А.	I would like to get into
12	interpreting.	
13	Q.	Okay. Are you fluent in ASL?
14	Α.	Yes.
15	Q.	Okay. Now, did you pick up ASL
16	just from being	around your parents or is that
17	something you ac	ctually studied somewhere?
18	Α.	Just from being around my parents.
19	Q.	Are you aware that you are the
20	emergency contac	et for your father?
21	Α.	Yes.
22	Q.	Okay. Did he let you know that?
23	Α.	Yes.
24	Q.	Okay. Did he explain why you were
25	the emergency co	ontact?
1		

1 Probably because I'm hearing and --Α. 2 I'm his oldest, and my brother is not as responsible 3 I would say. 4 Q. That's true in every family. 5 The -- is your brother ASL fluent 6 as well? 7 Α. Sort of, uh-huh. 8 Have you done any 0. Okay. 9 interpreting for anyone other than your father? 10 Α. No. Okay. 11 Do you do any interpreting Q. 12 for your mom? 13 Α. Sometimes if she needs me, but not 14 for like anything important. Usually just if we are 15 at the store or something. 16 0. Okay. What does she do if she 17 needs something important? 18 Α. She can -- she can talk pretty well 19 and she wears cochlear implants, so she communicates 20 pretty well. But otherwise, if she needs one she 21 tries to get an interpreter. 22 Q. Okay. But you're saying that she's capable of communicating pretty well without 23 24 assistance? Normally, uh-huh. 25 Α.

1	Q.	Okay. What are the limitations on
2	her ability to c	ommunicate?
3	Α.	Sometimes she has to read lips and
4	sometimes it can	be hard for her because some people
5	don't really mov	e their mouths or enunciate their
6	words, and she h	as trouble with pronunciations, too.
7	Q.	Do cochlear implants, does that
8	allow her to be	able to hear words?
9	A.	Yes, uh-huh.
10	Q.	Can she speak on the phone?
11	A.	No, not really.
12	Q.	But if she's with somebody
13	physically she c	an pretty much communicate with
14	them?	
15	A.	Yeah, uh-huh.
16	Q.	Does she go to doctor's visits by
17	herself?	
18	Α.	Normally, yeah, just for regular
19	checkups and stu	ff.
20	Q.	Okay. Have you ever known her to
21	bring an interpr	eter with her on a medical visit?
22	Α.	Yes.
23	Q.	Can you give me well, how often
24	would that be?	
25	Α.	She has she has diabetes so she

1	goes whe	en she goe	es to see her endocrinologist, she
2	definite	ely takes	one with her.
3		Q.	Outside of something super
4	technica	al like th	nat, she might just go by herself?
5		Α.	Probably, yes.
6		Q.	Does she ever go with your father
7	on medic	cal appoin	ntments?
8		Α.	Not normally, no.
9		Q.	Is that something you would do?
10		Α.	Sometimes. I don't really not
11	if it's	just like	e a regular doctor's appointment,
12	no, but	maybe if	it was something important I might.
13		Q.	Okay. Does he go by himself
14	sometime	es?	
15		Α.	Yeah, to his regular doctors,
16	uh-huh.		
17		Q.	How does he communicate with his
18	regular	doctors?	
19		A.	I believe he gets an interpreter.
20		Q.	Okay. Does he ever go in just by
21	himself	?	
22		Α.	Honestly I'm not sure. I don't
23	know.		
24		Q.	Okay. But some occasions you'll
25	go?		

1	Α.	I haven't been with him to like a
2	family doctor.	I've only really went to anything
3	that was sort of	an emergency.
4	Q.	Okay. When is the last time that
5	you attended a me	edical appointment with him?
6	Α.	A couple of months ago he had to go
7	to the hospital l	pecause they found another clot in
8	his left leg.	
9	Q.	And you went with him?
10	Α.	Yes, sir.
11	Q.	Did you help communicate with the
12	health care prov	iders?
13	Α.	No.
14	Q.	Okay. What was your role?
15	Α.	I was just there for support.
16	Q.	Okay. Do you think you would be
17	capable of commun	nicating with health care providers
18	and your father	if need be?
19	A.	I mean I could, yes, but
20	sometimes they ha	ave medical terms that I don't
21	really understand	d or know how to communicate that
22	effectively to h	im.
23	Q.	Have you ever attended a medical
24	appointment and	translated for him with a health
25	care provider?	

1	А.	Yes.
2	Q.	Okay. Is that more than once?
3	Α.	No, it was just the time that we
4	are here for.	
5	Q.	Okay. Did you do anything to
6	prepare for toda	y's deposition?
7	Α.	No.
8	Q.	What is your understanding of why
9	you are here?	
10	Α.	Excuse me. That the hospital that
11	my dad was at, P	arkwest Hospital, didn't provide an
12	interpreter or t	he interpreter that they did
13	provide, the com	puter was defective.
14	Q.	Did you participate in trying to
15	get him an inter	preter while he was at Parkwest?
16	Α.	I did.
17	Q.	Okay. What did you do?
18	Α.	I asked several nurses and doctors
19	if we could have	an in-person interpreter because
20	the VRI machine	was ineffective.
21	Q.	Now, why when did you make this
22	request?	
23	Α.	Several times a day that we were
24	there.	
25	Q.	When were you there?

1	A. I can't remember the exact dates
2	unfortunately, but I was there basically every day
3	that he was in the hospital.
4	Q. And every time you were there you
5	asked nurses for a live interpreter?
6	A. Yes.
7	Q. Do you remember the names of any of
8	the nurses?
9	A. I don't, unfortunately, I'm sorry.
10	Q. And what did the nurses say when
11	you would ask for one?
12	A. They would always tell me that one
13	was on the way.
14	Q. When you would visit the hospital
15	how long would you stay there for?
16	A. Hours, sometimes the whole day. I
17	spent the night one night.
18	Q. Do you remember what night that
19	was?
20	A. I don't, I'm sorry.
21	Q. Do you have any way of determining
22	what night it was you stayed?
23	A. Possibly if I looked at some
24	paperwork I might could, but I I'm not exactly
25	sure. The whole time is sort of a blur.

1	Q.	Were you at the hospital when he
2	was discharged?	
3	Α.	I was not, no.
4	Q.	Okay. If you will do me a favor.
5	There's some do	cuments there, Exhibits 11 through
6	14. Do you see	those?
7		MR. ROZYNSKI: Here is 11, 12. 13,
8	and 14.	
9	Q.	(BY MR. YOUNG) Do you see the
10	signature on Exl	nibit No. 11?
11	А.	Yes.
12	Q.	Okay. Do you know whose signature
13	that looks like	?
14	Α.	I don't know, no, sir.
15	Q.	Is it yours?
16	Α.	No.
17	Q.	Did any nurse ever say or strike
18	that.	
19		Did any nurse ever refuse to
20	provide an inter	rpreter?
21	Α.	They never outright refused, but
22	they never provi	ided one.
23	Q.	An interpreter never showed up?
24	Α.	Right.
25	Q.	To your knowledge.

1	A. Right.
2	Q. Was a VRI ever used while you were
3	present?
4	A. It was, yes.
5	Q. What occasions was the VRI used
6	while you were present?
7	A. Any time a nurse would come in they
8	would try to use well, for the first day anyway,
9	they would try to use the VRI machine.
10	Q. Was there any day that you weren't
11	there?
12	A. I mean, I wasn't there the entire
13	time. I tried to be there every day for at least a
14	few hours but don't recall there being a day that I
15	wasn't there entirely.
16	Q. Who else was there when you would
17	come visit?
18	A. My mom would be there, my dad's
19	girlfriend and his mom and her husband were all
20	there.
21	Q. You said you kept asking for an
22	interpreter. Was anyone else asking for an
23	interpreter besides you?
24	A. My mom was.
25	Q. Did you witness her asking for an

1	interpreter?
2	A. Yes.
3	Q. And what did the nurses tell her?
4	A. The same thing they told me, that
5	they were trying to get one.
6	Q. Did you ever witness a successful
7	interaction with the VRI?
8	A. No.
9	Q. Not once?
10	A. No.
11	Q. And I guess success could be
12	measured a lot of different ways.
13	Was there ever an occasion when the
14	VRI was plugged in and the interpreter popped up?
15	Did you ever see the interpreter pop on the screen?
16	A. Yes, I did see an interpreter pop
17	up on the screen, yes.
18	Q. Was your dad ever able to make any
19	communication at all with the person on the screen?
20	A. Not no, not very well. Both the
21	interpreter and my dad, you could hear the
22	interpreter talking on the VRI machine and she was
23	saying that she was having trouble seeing him, that
24	it was freezing up a lot and he was seeing the same
25	thing on his side.
1	

1 Was the -- how many 0. Okay. 2 occasions were you there when the VRI machine was 3 used? 4 Α. Like I said, they really only used 5 it the first day, and then after the complications 6 they never even -- they actually took it the out of 7 the room, I believe. Are you sure about that or are you 8 **Q.** guessing? 9 10 Α. I'm not one hundred percent sure, 11 but they did not use it after the first day. They 12 just relied on me or my mom. 13 Now, you say the first day. 0. So 14 does that mean there was just one occasion when it 15 failed that you witnessed? 16 Α. Yeah, multiple times that day that 17 they tried it. 18 So you are saying -- how many times 0. 19 if you can remember? 20 I would say five or six. Α. 21 really say for sure but several times that they 22 tried to use it. 23 And would they just turn it off or **Q.** 24 would they say goodbye or what happened? 25 The VRI would just freeze up and Α.

- 1 then they would try to call an interpreter back and
  2 it wasn't working so then they would eventually
- 3 unplug it. And then I believe that kind of word got
- 4 around between the nurses on the floor that I was
- 5 there and interpreting, so then that's sort of why
- 6 they didn't try to utilize it anymore.
- 7 Q. Did you ever ask that they try to
- 8 utilize the VRI?
- 9 A. No.
- 10 Q. Okay. When you say unplug it,
- 11 where did it unplug from?
- 12 A. An outlet in the wall. It was like
- 13 rolled in on a pole and they would plug it into the
- 14 wall.
- 15 Q. Okay. So the word got around that
- 16 you were there interpreting, so the nurses kind of
- 17 fell back on you instead of a live interpreter.
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. I guess instead of an ASL qualified
- 20 interpreter, so to speak.
- 21 A. Right.
- Q. Was there ever an occasion while
- 23 you were there that you felt like the nursing staff
- 24 didn't understand something that your dad was
- 25 experiencing because of the absence of a live

1	interpreter?
2	A. Yes. Uh-huh.
3	Q. Okay. When was that?
4	A. Well, I know that he was trying to
5	let, you know, express that he was in pain and that
6	something didn't feel right and they kept telling
7	him that or they were telling me to interpret to
8	him that they just that he just needs to give it
9	time, that he would eventually feel better. But he
10	didn't really feel like he was able to communicate
11	how he was feeling or what he was going through.
12	Q. When you say how he was feeling and
13	what he was going through, are you talking about
14	pain?
15	A. Right. Yes.
16	Q. Anything in addition to pain?
17	A. I'm sorry, could you clarify
18	Q. Well, was there anything that you
19	didn't think the staff was getting other than the
20	level of pain that your father was in?
21	A. I'm not really sure. I don't
22	I'm trying to think of specific occasions that that
23	might have happened. I mean, I know that when he
24	was I wasn't there when he was discharged but I
25	do know that when he was discharged that he was

1	telling the nurse that his legs still hurt and the
2	nurse there was no interpreter, he was just using
3	his voice and he was saying my leg still hurts and
4	the nurse thought he was saying that he wanted to go
5	home, that he was saying home, and then she just,
6	you know, kept saying, yeah, we are going to send
7	you home and he was like trying to say no, I'm
8	hurting.
9	Q. Do you know if your mom was present
10	at discharge?
11	A. She was, I believe, uh-huh.
12	Q. Okay. Well, do you think she would
13	have been able to understand what your father was
14	saying?
15	A. She probably would have, yes.
16	Q. Okay. Do you
17	INTERPRETER: Are you okay with us
18	leaving? We can stay, but there's a bill
19	that comes with it.
20	MR. YOUNG: I know, but unless they
21	are picking it up, I guess we are done.
22	(Interpreters leave the deposition)
23	Q. (BY MR. YOUNG) Who told you about
24	the hurt and home confusion?
25	A. My dad did.

1	Q. When did he tell you this?
2	A. The day after he or the day that
3	he got home.
4	Q. You he said he actually wanted to
5	stay at the hospital?
6	A. Yes.
7	Q. Was there any thought about taking
8	him back to another hospital?
9	A. He was being followed up with like
10	a physical therapist, occupational therapist, and I
11	believe they came like the next morning and they
12	I believe from Parkwest, too, and they were telling
13	us the way his leg looked, looked normal and like
14	my dad actually Facetimed me because there was no
15	interpreter present when the therapist came either,
16	so he Facetimed me so I could tell him what the
17	therapist was
18	(Mr. Tomei reenters the room).
19	MR. YOUNG: What is going on?
20	MR. ROZYNSKI: He wants to be
21	present.
22	MR. YOUNG: Okay.
23	MR. ROZYNSKI: He doesn't feel
24	comfortable not being here.
25	MR. YOUNG: Okay.

```
1
              MR. ROZYNSKI: And so she has --
 2
     she might have work tomorrow, so he's
 3
     concerned about that and -- going back and
     forth.
 4
 5
              Okay. So I guess we'll start at
 6
     9:00 a.m. tomorrow.
 7
              MR. YOUNG: Okay. We are going to
     postpone from here on out, I quess?
 8
                                           Is that
 9
     it?
10
              MR. ROZYNSKI:
                             Yes.
11
              MR. YOUNG: Will they agree not to
12
     talk about the case or anything between now
13
     and tomorrow?
14
                              Okay. Yep.
              MR. ROZYNSKI:
15
              MR. YOUNG: All right. I quess we
16
     are done then.
                     Thank you.
17
         (Off the record at 5:08 p.m.)
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
```

1	CERTIFICATE
2	STATE OF TENNESSEE:
3	COUNTY OF KNOX:
4	
5	I, Jeffrey D. Rusk, Registered
6	Professional Reporter and Notary Public, do hereby
7	certify that I reported in machine shorthand the
8	foregoing proceedings; that the foregoing pages,
9	inclusive, were prepared by me using computer-aided
10	transcription and constitute a true and accurate
11	record of said proceedings.
12	I further certify that I am not an
13	attorney or relative of any attorney or counsel
14	connected with the action, nor financially
15	interested in the action.
16	Witness my hand and official seal
17	this the 16th day of December, 2019.
18	7 01
19	ATO RESUL
20	TENNESSEE
21	Jeffrey D. Rusk, RPR, CLVS Notary Public at Large
22	My Commission Expires: 6/4/2022 TCRB License No. 212
23	
24	
25	
1	

#### SCOTT ALLEN TOMEI vs PARKWEST MEDICAL CENTER and COVENANT HEALTH Tomei, Tala - 12/16/2019

Index: 11..give

	appointment	checkups 11:19	Defendants 4:3,23	Exhibit 16:10
1	12:11 13:5,24	City 7:20,22 8:20	deposed 4:24	Exhibits 16:5
<b>11</b> 16:5,7,10	appointments 12:7	Civil 4:4	<b>deposition</b> 4:2,10 5:12,14 14:6 22:22	experiencing 20:25
<b>12</b> 16:7	Arnett 4:5	clarify 21:17	,	
<b>13</b> 16:7	<b>ASL</b> 9:13,15 10:5	clear 5:22,23	determining 15:21	explain 9:24
<b>14</b> 16:6,8	20:19	<b>clot</b> 13:7	Devin 5:5	express 21:5
<b>15</b> 6:24	assistance 10:24	cochlear 10:19	diabetes 11:25	expressly 4:17
<b>16th</b> 4:4	<b>attend</b> 7:18,25	11:7	diner 8:22	F
	attended 13:5,23	comfortable 23:24	discharge 22:10	
2	attorneys 5:6	communicate 11:2,13 12:17	discharged 16:2 21:24,25	Facetimed 23:14,
<b>2019</b> 4:5	aware 9:19	13:11,21 21:10	distinction 5:20	fact 5:8
<b>224</b> 6:20 7:5	В	communicates	doctor 13:2	failed 19:15
<b>2300</b> 4:6		communicating	doctor's 11:16	familiar 5:8
3	<b>back</b> 6:6 9:7 20:1, 17 23:8 24:3	10:23 13:17	12:11	family 10:4 13:2
<u></u>	<b>Barrel</b> 8:19	communication 18:19	<b>doctors</b> 12:15,18 14:18	father 9:20 10:9
<b>37774</b> 6:21	basically 15:2	complications	documents 16:5	12:6 13:18 21:20 22:13
4	began 5:1	19:5	Draper 4:5	favor 16:4
	begin 6:12	computer 14:13	duly 4:23	Federal 4:3
<b>4:43</b> 5:1	biggest 5:19	concerned 24:3		feel 21:6,9,10 23:23
5	<b>bill</b> 22:18	confusion 22:24	E	feeling 21:11,12
	<b>bit</b> 5:14	contact 9:20,25	Eats 8:23	fell 20:17
<b>5:08</b> 24:17	<b>blur</b> 15:25	conversation 5:15	effectively 13:22	felt 20:23
	<b>bring</b> 11:21	<b>couple</b> 5:6 13:6	emergency 9:20,	filing 4:16
9	Broderick 5:4	courses 9:4,5	25 13:3	finish 6:12
<b>9:00</b> 24:6	brother 10:2,5	Covenant 5:6	employed 7:9	floor 20:4
		Cracker 8:19	endocrinologist	fluent 9:13 10:5
A	C	D	<b>entire</b> 17:12	forbid 6:7
<b>a.m.</b> 24:6	Cafe 8:23		<b>enunciate</b> 6:9 11:5	<b>form</b> 4:19
ability 11:2	<b>call</b> 20:1	dad 6:23 9:3 14:11	enunciated 6:4	formalities 4:16
absence 20:25	<b>called</b> 4:22 8:22 9:2	18:18,21 20:24 22:25 23:14	<b>estate</b> 8:2,5,10	found 13:7
accurate 5:22	capable 10:23	<b>dad's</b> 17:18	eventually 20:2	<b>freeze</b> 19:25
addition 21:16	13:17	<b>dates</b> 15:1	21:9	freezing 18:24
address 6:19	caption 4:16	day 4:4 14:23 15:2,	exact 15:1	<b>fully</b> 6:7,9
<b>agree</b> 24:11	care 13:12,17,25	16 17:8,10,13,14 19:5,11,13,16 23:2	EXAMINATION 5:2	G G
agreed 4:10,18	Carolina 7:10 8:25	December 4:5	examined 4:24	
<b>Ale</b> 7:10	case 24:12	defective 14:13	Excuse 14:10	girlfriend 17:19
anymore 20:6	certificate 4:16	GEIGGLIVE 14.13	<b>LACUSC</b> 14.10	give 6:4 11:23 21:8

#### SCOTT ALLEN TOMEI vs PARKWEST MEDICAL CENTER and COVENANT HEALTH Tomei. Tala - 12/16/2019

<b>God</b> 6:7	important 5:25	<b>lips</b> 11:3	nurse 16:17,19	plans 9:7
<b>Good</b> 8:23	6:9,11 10:14,17 12:12	live 6:22,25 7:1,5	17:7 22:1,2,4	Plaza 4:6
goodbye 19:24	<b>in-person</b> 14:19	15:5 20:17,25	<b>nurses</b> 14:18 15:5, 8,10 18:3 20:4,16	<b>plug</b> 20:13
graduate 7:23 8:3	ineffective 14:20	lived 7:2 8:25	nursing 20:23	plugged 18:14
guess 18:11 20:19	instance 4:22	Lone 9:2		<b>PM</b> 5:1
22:21 24:5,8,15	interaction 18:7	long 7:15 15:15	0	<b>pole</b> 20:13
guessing 19:9	interpret 21:7	looked 15:23 23:13	<b>oath</b> 5:16	<b>pop</b> 18:15,16
Н	interpreter 10:21	lot 18:12,24	objections 4:18	<b>popped</b> 18:14
	11:21 12:19 14:12,	<b>Loudon</b> 6:20 7:19	observe 5:24	Possibly 15:23
<b>H-O-P-E</b> 6:20	15,19 15:5 16:20,23 17:22,23 18:1,14,	Lyon 5:5	occasion 18:13	postpone 24:8
Hagood 4:6	15,16,21,22 20:1,	M	19:14 20:22	practice 8:7
half 6:4	17,20 21:1 22:2,17 23:15		occasions 12:24	prepare 14:6
happened 19:24 21:23	interpreters 22:22	machine 4:11 14:20 17:9 18:22	17:5 19:2 21:22	present 17:3,6
hard 11:4	interpreting 9:12	19:2	occupational 23:10	22:9 23:15,21
head 6:3	10:9,11 20:5,16	make 14:21 18:18	offices 4:5	pretty 10:18,20,23
health 5:6 13:12,		meaning 6:5	oldest 10:2	Procedure 4:4
17,24	J	<b>means</b> 5:17	online 9:4	proceeding 5:16
hear 11:8 18:21	<b>Jeffrey</b> 4:7,11	meant 6:8	outlet 20:12	proceedings 5:1
hearing 4:20 10:1	jumbles 6:14	measured 18:12	outright 16:21	Professional 4:8,
high 7:18,21,22		medical 11:21 12:7	Outright 10.21	12
home 22:5,7,24	K	13:5,20,23	Р	pronunciations
23:3	kind 6:4 20:3,16	minutes 6:24		11:6
Honestly 12:22	knowledge 16:25	<b>mom</b> 7:1,3,5 10:12 17:18,19,24 19:12	<b>p.m.</b> 24:17	protocols 5:24
<b>Hope</b> 6:20 7:6	Knoxville 4:7 7:11	22:9	pain 21:5,14,16,20	<b>provide</b> 14:11,13 16:20
<b>hospital</b> 13:7 14:10,11 15:3,14		months 6:6 13:6	paperwork 15:24	provided 16:22
16:1 23:5,8	L	morning 23:11	parents 9:16,18	provider 13:25
<b>hours</b> 15:16 17:14	Large 4:9	mouths 11:5	<b>Parkwest</b> 5:6 14:11,15 23:12	<b>providers</b> 13:12,17
House 7:10 9:2	lawsuit 5:7,9,16	<b>move</b> 11:5	participate 14:14	Public 4:8,12
huh-uh 6:5	6:16	multiple 19:16	pending 5:9	purposes 5:19
hundred 19:10	leave 22:22		people 11:4	pursuant 4:3
hurt 22:1,24	leaving 22:18	N	percent 19:10	
hurting 22:8	left 13:8	<b>names</b> 15:7	<b>person</b> 18:19	Q
hurts 22:3	leg 13:8 22:3 23:13	night 15:17,18,22	<b>phone</b> 11:10	qualified 20:19
husband 17:19	legs 22:1	normal 5:15 23:13	physical 23:10	question 6:12,13
	Lenoir 7:20,22 8:20	North 8:25	physically 11:13	questions 4:19
<u> </u>	level 21:20	<b>Notary</b> 4:8,12	<b>pick</b> 9:15	5:25
implants 10:19	license 8:5,12	notes 4:14	picking 22:21	
11:7	limitations 11:1		. 5	

### SCOTT ALLEN TOMEI vs PARKWEST MEDICAL CENTER and COVENANT HEALTH Tomei, Tala - 12/16/2019

Index: read..Young

<u> </u>				
	shorthand 4:11	technical 12:4	unplug 20:3,10,11	
R	showed 16:23	telling 21:6,7 22:1	utilize 20:6,8	
read 11:3	<b>side</b> 18:25	23:12		
real 5:24 8:2,5,9	<b>sign</b> 4:14	<b>Tennessee</b> 4:6,7,9 6:21	V	
recall 17:14	signature 16:10,12	terms 13:20	verbal 5:25	
record 5:23 6:15 24:17	<b>sir</b> 5:13 7:12 13:10 16:14	therapist 23:10,15,	visit 11:21 15:14 17:17	
reenters 23:18	<b>sort</b> 10:7 13:3 15:25 20:5	thereto 4:15	<b>visits</b> 11:16	
<b>refuse</b> 16:19		thing 18:4,25	voice 22:3	
refused 16:21	speak 11:10 20:20	thought 22:4 23:7	<b>VRI</b> 14:20 17:2,5,9	
Registered 4:8,12	specific 21:22	time 13:4 14:3 15:4,	18:7,14,22 19:2,25 20:8	
regular 11:18	spent 15:17	25 17:7,13 21:9		
12:11,15,18	staff 20:23 21:19	times 14:23 19:16,	w	
relied 19:12	Star 9:2	18,21	waived 4:17	
remember 15:1,7, 18 19:19	start 6:15 24:5	today 5:7 6:5		
<b>Reporter</b> 4:8,12	<b>State</b> 4:9	today's 14:6	wall 20:12,14	
represent 5:5	<b>stay</b> 15:15 22:18 23:5	told 18:4 22:23	wanted 22:4 23:4	
request 4:3 14:22	stayed 15:22	<b>Tomei</b> 4:2,21 5:4 23:18	ways 18:12	
reserved 4:19	Steak 9:2	tomorrow 24:2,6,	wears 10:19	
responses 6:1,9	<b>store</b> 10:15	13	witnessed 19:15	
responsible 10:2	<b>strike</b> 16:17	touching 4:16	word 20:3,15	
restaurant 9:1	studied 9:17	transcribe 4:14	words 6:4 11:6,8	
role 13:14	<b>stuff</b> 11:19	transcribed 5:21	work 24:2	
rolled 20:13	success 18:11	translated 13:24	<b>worked</b> 7:15 8:19, 22 9:1	
room 19:7 23:18	successful 18:6	transmission 4:17	working 20:2	
ROZYNSKI 16:7	<b>Suite</b> 4:6	trouble 11:6 18:23		
23:20,23 24:1,10,14	super 12:3	true 10:4	Υ	
Rules 4:4	<b>support</b> 13:15	turn 19:23	year 7:17	
Rusk 4:7,11	swear 4:13	<b>typed</b> 5:20	years 6:7	
	sworn 4:23	typewriting 4:14	Young 5:3,5 16:9	
<b>S</b>			22:20,23 23:19,22,	
school 7:18,21,22	T	U	25 24:7,11,15	
8:2 9:8	takes 12:2	<b>uh-huh</b> 5:10 6:4		
schooling 7:25	taking 9:3,4 23:7	7:7 10:7,25 11:9,15 12:16 21:2 22:11		
screen 18:15,17,19	TALA 4:2,21	understand 5:17		
<b>send</b> 22:6	talk 10:18 24:12	6:5,8 13:21 20:24		
<b>server</b> 7:14 8:15,16		22:13		
shake 6:3	talking 6:15 18:22 21:13	understanding 14:8		